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Notes

ON THE USE OF TWO SPEARS IN HOMERIC WARFARE

On *Odyssey* I, 255-256,

εἰ γὰρ νῦν ἐλθὼν δόμου ἐν πρώτῃσι θύρῃσιν
σταίῃ ἔχων πῆληκα καὶ ἀσπίδα καὶ δύο δοῦρε,

Ameis-Hentze comment thus: “πῆληκα, κτέ, i. e., in full armor. For safety men in Homer had to put on their armor even when traveling.” This is an oversight: ἐλθὼν does not mean that Odysseus will appear armed *because* he has been traveling. There is no evidence in Homer that the traveler wore helmet or carried shield, and the reference to *two* spears is conclusive. Mentès-Athena, Telemachus and Theoclymenus carry one spear when they travel, and Hector has but one when he goes to the city (*Il.* VI 318 f.): he wears his helmet, too, because he comes from battle. The passage cited above merely means “ready for a fight.” Writers on Homeric life, e. g., Seymour and Bauer, say that sometimes the warrior carries two spears, but do not suggest when or why. Perrin, commenting on our passage, makes two spears part of the full Homeric panoply, and Ameis-Hentze (on *Il.* V 495) remark that the heroes *customarily* took two spears to battle. Let us test this to see how far and in what sense it is true.

In the *Iliad* eight warriors on occasion have two spears, but only twice are two certainly used in the actual conflict: the ambidextrous Asteropæus hurls with either hand a spear at Achilles (XXI 162), and Patroclus in his combat with Sarpedon hurls a second spear, without having had a chance to recover the first (XVI 462-479). In this duel the poet has expressly told us that the two warriors were each provided with two spears (XVI 139; XII 298). Besides, both warriors sprang from their chariots to meet each other, and the evidence is strong that the two spears, if carried, were regularly borne in the chariot, from which they were taken by the warrior when about to engage in the general mêlée. Thus Agamemnon (XI 43), who is going to battle with his chariot, if not actually in it — which is the more probable; and Hector (V 495, VI 104, XI 212). The latter when he attacks the wall, separating himself, by the advice of Poly-

damas, from his chariot, naturally has two spears (XII 465). Patroclus (XVI 139) prefers two spears "that fit his hand," to the mighty "Pelian ash" of Achilles. The latter hero, like Aias and Diomedes and the war divinities Ares and Athena, needs but one spear. For the second is a "spare," and warriors of superior prowess do not require this since they can always rely on their irresistible onrush to enable them to recover their spear. But Nestor has two spears (X 76), and Idomeneus, when arming himself for the general conflict, takes two from the large number of captured Trojan spears which stand in his tent (XIII 241, 260 ff.). The only other warrior in the *Iliad* who has two spears is Paris, when, as the two armies draw near for the first time, he stands forth as a single champion (Γ 18). Critics, ancient and modern, have been troubled by this passage: here is an archer, wearing a leopard-skin and carrying bow and sword, and at the same time brandishing two spears. The difficulty disappears if, first, we notice the force of the adversative and the article, unnecessarily rejected by Aristarchus, in vs. 18 f.,

αὐτὰρ ὁ δοῦρα δύω κεκορυθμένα χαλκῷ
πάλλων Ἀργείων προκαλίζετο πάντας ἀρίστους.

Monro's description of the use of article and adversative, δέ, αὐτάρ, ἀλλά (*Hom. Gr.* ² p. 225), fits excellently: "The article in all such cases evidently expresses a contrast: not however between two persons, but between *two characters* in which the *same person* is thought of." In our passage the contrast is between Paris the bowman and Paris the πρόμαχος. Secondly, we must understand that Paris is merely making a challenge to a combat which is to be formally arranged, and that he has borrowed the two spears, which he brandishes to draw the attention of the enemy to his defiance.¹ Later Paris arms himself as a spearman, and then he takes but one spear.

One spear is the rule in all the formal single combats. The best example is that between Hector and Aias, which is little more than an "exhibition" match (VII 244-273). The two warriors hurl their spears, recover them and thrust, then hurl huge stones, and are about to attack each other with their swords when the contest is halted. In

¹ So Hector brandishes two spears, which he takes from his chariot, when he rouses his army to fight (V 495, VI 104, XI 212). When he halts the line of battle, on the other hand (III 78, VII 55), and when he addresses his soldiers at the close of the second day's battle (VIII 494), he has but one spear.

other words, they use all the regular methods of attack of the Homeric spearman.

In the *Odyssey*, aside from the passage cited above (I 256), and Book XXII (where Odysseus does appear to the Suitors armed with two spears) there are only two places where two are mentioned: Odysseus takes two when he prepares to fight the six-headed Scylla (XII 228), and he replies to the taunts of Eurymachus (XVIII 376 ff.) that if war should break out and he could have shield, two spears and helmet of bronze, he would prove his prowess. And he adds that if Odysseus should return, the doors, wide as they are, would be all too narrow for the escape of Eurymachus. In the two references (here and at I 256) to the coming of Odysseus and the difficulty of getting past the door the poet seems to be foreshadowing the actual situation in Book XXII. These also indicate that two spears were part of the warrior's equipment. But the passages in the *Iliad* show that they cannot be regarded as strictly belonging to the "full Homeric panoply." Achilles and Athena, with one spear, are certainly in full panoply, and in the formal duel two are never used (the fight between Sarpedon and Patroclus is not an exception, for the two heroes leap from their chariots, where each had two spears, and rush upon each other without more ado). The second spear is rather to be regarded as an "extra," something like the second string to the bow.

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GREEK LORE OF ZOÖMIMICRY

Several ancient writers record the view that man's progress is due to imitation of nature, e. g., Cicero (*Leg.* 1.26): *Artes innumerabiles repertae sunt docente natura, quam imitata ratio res ad vitam necessarias sollerter consecuta est.* Ausonius (12.5) regards *omniparens ars* as *naturae imitatrix*. See also Aristotle *Meteor.* 4.3; Claud. 45.44. The idea is set forth in poetic dress by Pope, *Essay on Man*, *Ep.* 3:

There then to man the voice of Nature spake:
 "Go, from the creatures thy instruction take,
 Thy arts of building from the ant receive;
 Learn from the mole to plough, the worm to weave;
 Learn from the little nautilus to sail,
 Spread the thin oars, and catch the driving gale;
 Here, too, all forms of social reason find
 And hence let reason late instruct mankind."